

If you want to keep your code clean and concise to make it easier to understand, modify and extend, then go for refactoring.

Java Refactoring Part-I With Eclipse

Refactoring is the process of changing the internal structure of a program (like removing redundancies, eliminating unused functions, rejuvenating obsolete designs, etc) without changing its external behaviour. There are a number of good tools with which you can do Java refactoring—Eclipse, JRefactory and JEdit, to name a few.

In this two-part article, we will explore how you could refactor Java code automatically, using one of the most commonly used tools—Eclipse. Eclipse is a popular open source extensible IDE for Java and other languages. It provides preview and instant validation, in addition to an 'undo/redo' facility for refactoring. You can get the latest version of Eclipse from [<http://www.eclipse.org/downloads/index.php>]

Figure 1 shows the Refactor dropdown menu in Eclipse. You can see that it has four sections. The first section has the 'Undo' and 'Redo' functions on it, and the other three sections relate to the different types of refactoring operations that you can do with Eclipse.

Java Refactoring with Eclipse can be best explained by applying various refactoring techniques to a sample program shown in Figure 1. The idea is to make the code cleaner and more understandable.

In this article, we will discuss a few refactoring operations (like encapsulate field, change method signature and extract method). The first refactoring technique that we will apply to our sample program is 'Encapsulate Field'. The idea is to add

'setter and getter' methods for the class field members. To encapsulate a field, select the field name and click *Encapsulate Field* menu item under *Refactor* menu. Enter 'setter' and 'getter' method names and modifiers in the pop-up dialog as shown in Figure 2. Figure 3 shows the preview dialog. Click on the OK button to accept the changes. Similarly, define the 'getter and setter' methods for other fields like `smtpPort`, `toAddr`, `fromAddr`, `subject` and `body`.

Since we have defined the 'getter and setter' methods for class field members, we will modify the constructor so that it becomes a 'no argument' constructor. To change a method signature, select the method name (in our case, it is the constructor) and click *Change Method Signature* under the *Refactor* menu. Delete all the method parameters as shown in Figure 4. Figures 5 and 6 show the preview dialog.

The next refactoring technique that we will apply to our sample program is the 'Extract Method'. We will use this technique to extract two methods—one that connects to the SMTP server and another method that disconnects from the SMTP. To extract a method, select the section of code and click on the *Extract Method* menu item under the *Refactor* menu. Figures 7 and 8 show the preview dialog. They also show that Eclipse has intelligently extracted the method and updated all the references.

Similarly, extract the method `disconnectSMTP` as shown in Figures 9 and 10. A sample SMTP e-mail client program in Java has been included in the LFY CD.

In the first part of this article we have seen how to apply the various refactoring techniques from Eclipse to make the code cleaner and easier to maintain. In the second part, we will take a look at the rest of the refactoring operations. Until then, happy refactoring!

References

<http://www.refactoring.com/>
www.cs.umanitoba.ca/~eclipse/13-Refactoring.pdf
<http://c2.com/cgi/wiki?WhatIsRefactoring>

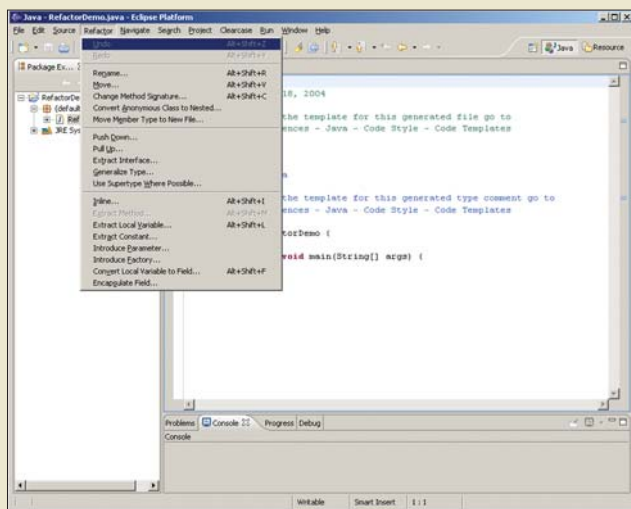


Figure 1: Refactoring with Eclipse

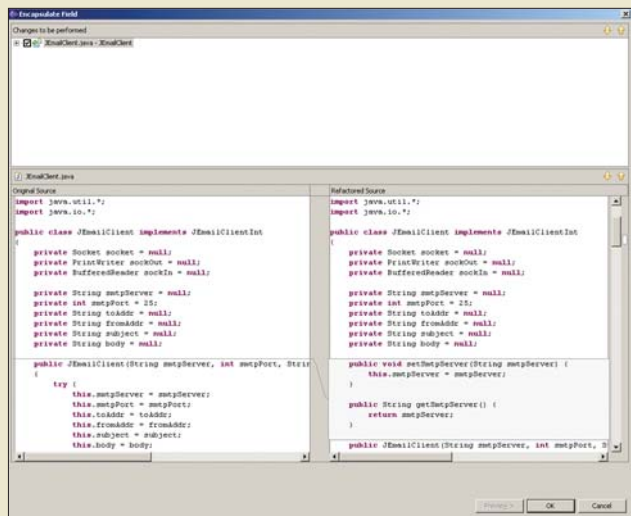


Figure 3: Encapsulate field preview dialog

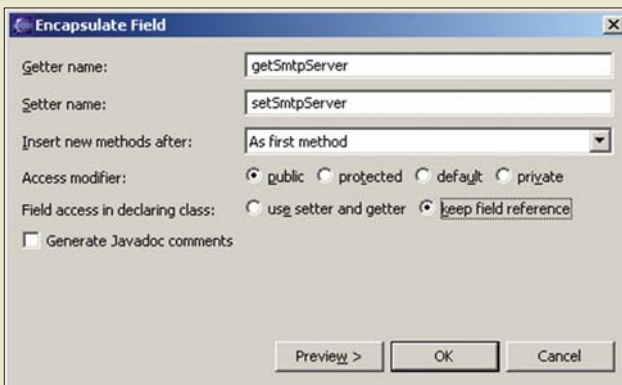


Figure 2: Encapsulate Field pop-up dialog

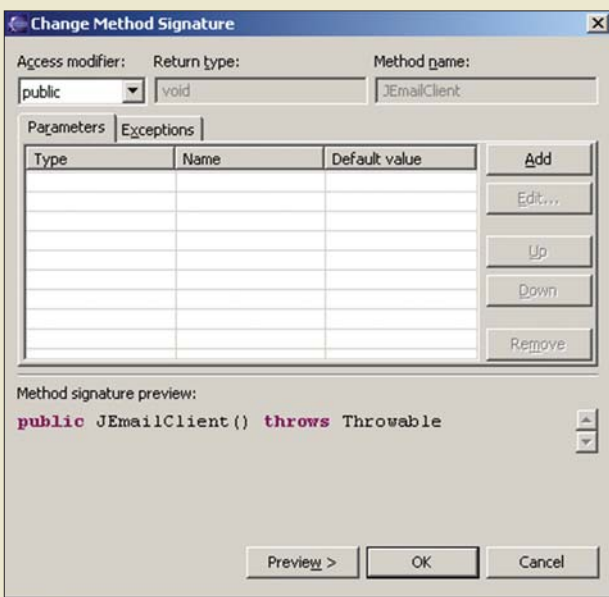


Figure 4: Change method signature pop-up dialog

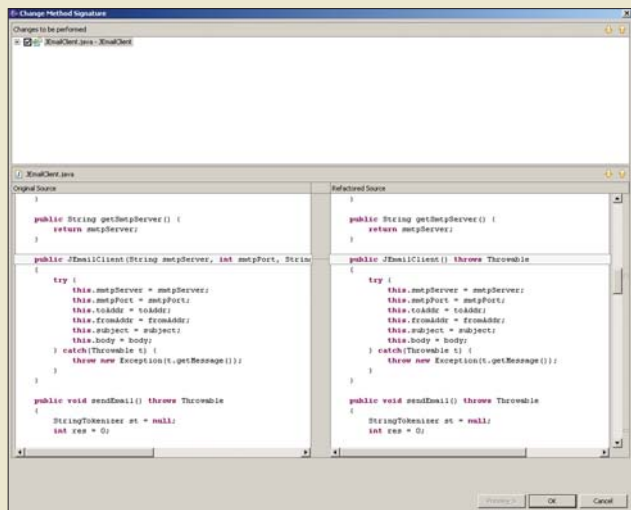


Figure 5: Change method signature preview dialog

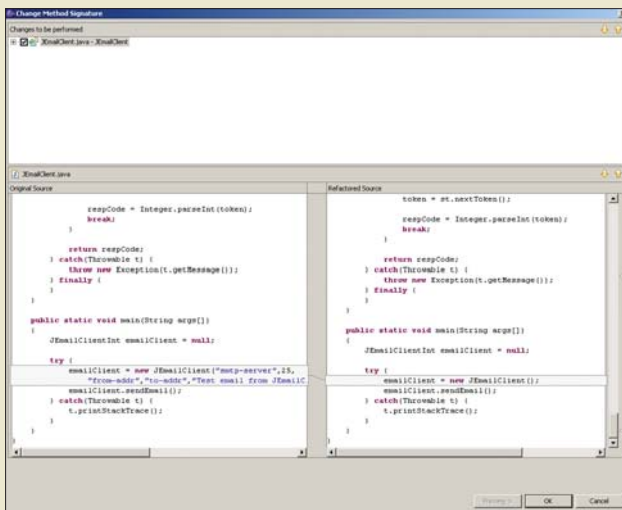


Figure 6: Change method signature preview dialog

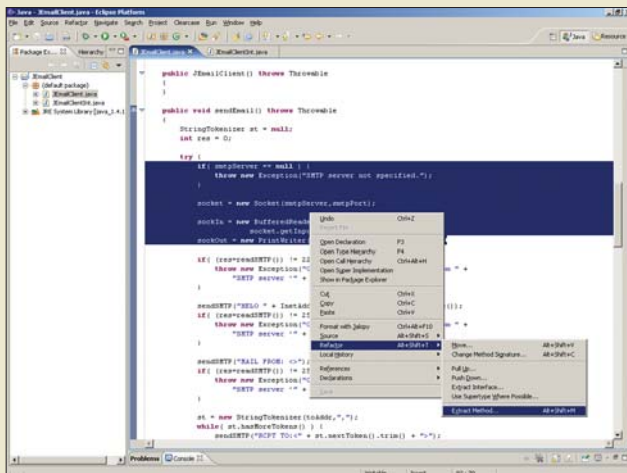


Figure 7: Extract method refactoring operation

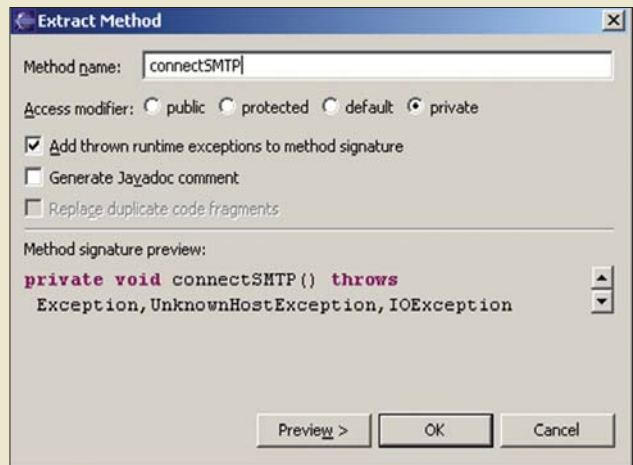


Figure 8: Extract method pop-up dialog

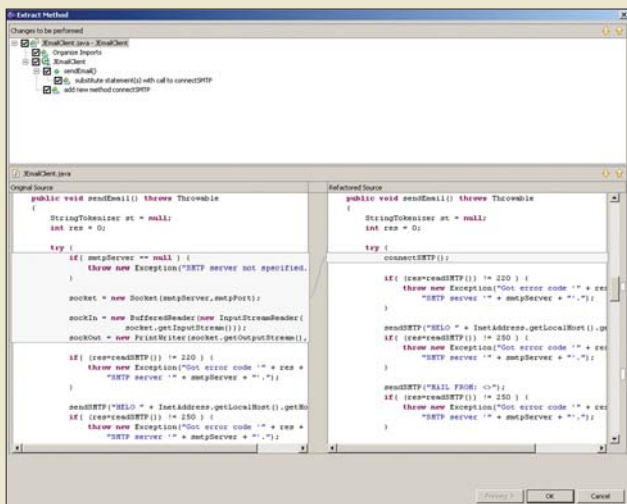


Figure 9: Extract method preview dialog

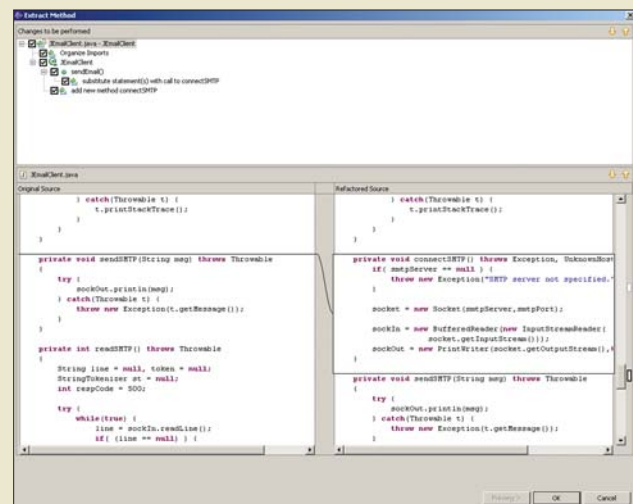


Figure 10: Extract method preview dialog

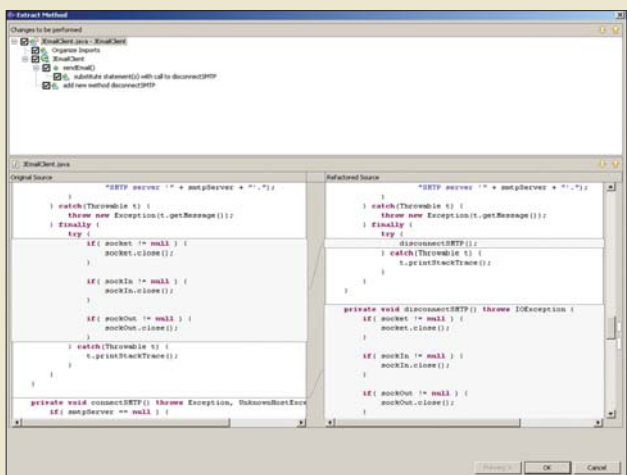


Figure 11: Extract method preview dialog

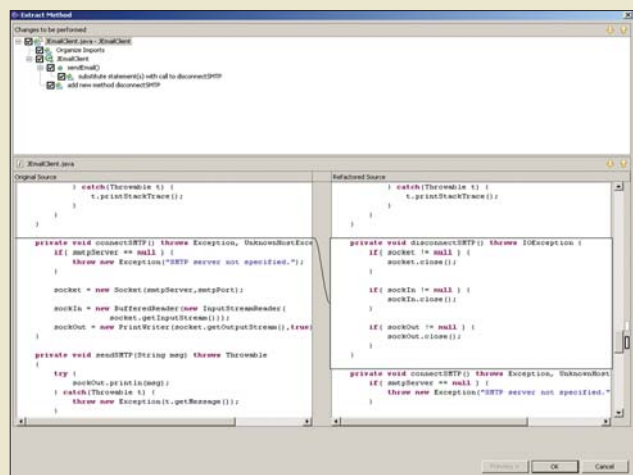


Figure 12: Extract method preview dialog

LFY

(to be continued...)

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